

REMARKS

Claim 1 is pending in the present application. Claim 1 is herein amended. No new matter has been entered. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office action mailed on July 24, 2008.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Narahara et al.* (USP 2002/0042735) in view of *Shipman* (USP 5,819,232).

Applicants disagree with the examiner's basis for rejecting claim 1. However, to expedite prosecution and clarify the subject matter of the claimed invention, Applicants herein amend claim 1. In view of this amendment and the following remarks, Applicants request that the rejection of this claim be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited references, alone or in combination, discloses a system for managing a quantity of inventory of parts constituting a product comprising a first and second inventory quantity computing means *as described in the claimed invention*. In the present invention, the system includes a first inventory quantity computing means for computing a *tentative quantity* of inventory of the parts at one of the stages and a second inventory quantity computing means for computing *actual quantities* of inventory of the parts at the other stages. The two computing means, for example, are interrelated such that "the inventory managing means outputs the actual quantity of the inventory of the parts computed by the second inventory computing means to the part order quantity computing means as the

subject-to-subtraction quantity of inventory in computing the part order quantity.” *See* Claim 1. The part order quantity computing means uses the “subject-to-subtraction quantity” in order to compute a part order quantity to be directed to the part supplier.

Whereas, the *Narahara et al.* reference merely describes a parts procuring and managing system having a center warehouse 3 connected by a network shared by a client 1 and supplier 2. In this system, when the client 1 makes an order to the supplier 2, the client 1 calculates the client’s obligation for acceptance for each supplier and part number, the quantity in number of parts, **based on the total of the number of parts previously ordered to the supplier decisively and on the basis of a forecast and on the number of parts delivered up to the present time,** and then makes a forecast-based order to the supplier to procure parts. Thus, according to the *Narahara et al.* system, “the client gives a shipment instruction to the center warehouse depending on the status of production to cause the center warehouse to deliver parts.” *See*, paragraph [0120]. “Such a parts shipment instructing method serves to minimize the client’s inventories and avoid the possible shortage of parts to be delivered.” Thus, the *Narahara et al.* reference describes a system for managing the procurement of parts **transported to a central warehouse 3.** Therefore, it would not have been obvious at the time of this invention to modify the parts procurement system disclosed in the *Narahara et al.* reference to include an additional second inventory quantity computing means for inputting the incoming quantity information and the outgoing quantity information of the orderer of the parts **and for computing actual quantities of inventory of the parts at the other stages** from the difference between the incoming quantity information and the outgoing information.

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Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness rejection of claim 1.

Conclusion

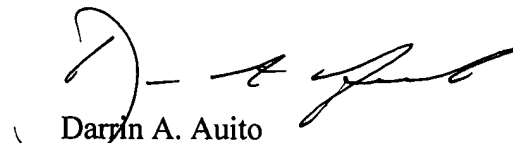
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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